GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2879
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2015
Anti Religious Posts
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government flagged posts on Social Media websites on the grounds of being "anti-religion";
(b) if so, the details on the number of posts removed during the period of 2012â€"15, year-wise; and
(c) the details of actions taken against those who posted them and under which act?

Answer

(a) and (b): Government takes action under Section 69A of Information Technology (IT) Act 2000 for blocking of websites/ Specific Web pages with objectionable contents, whenever requests are received from designated nodal officers or upon Court orders for blocking of websites/ Web pages. Section 69A of the Information Technology Act 2000 empowers Government to block any information generated, transmitted, received, stored or hosted in any Computer Resource in the interest of Sovereignty and Integrity of India, defence of India, security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States or public order or for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence relating to above.

There is no institutional monitoring mechanism for monitoring social networking sites. At present, Law Enforcement and Security Agencies make searches on the Internet on specific case-to-case basis. Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) within the National Media Centre in Ministry of Information and Broadcasting tracks current trends on social media and monitors Public Interface on the social media network.

A total of 136, 13 and 10 and 492URLs of social media websites were blocked in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 (till 30th Nov 2015) respectively under Section 69A through the Committee constituted under the rules therein. Further, a total of 533, 432 and 352 URLs of social media websites were blocked in compliance with the directions of the competent Courts of India in 2013, 2014 and 2015 (till 30th November 2015) respectively. Besides, Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) gets requests for blocking of objectionable content from individuals and organisations, which merely forwards those requests to the concerned websites for appropriate action.

(c): The cyberspace is virtual, borderless and anonymous. Any one can open account in any name including fake name from any part of the world. Any user with any email address is allowed to register with social networking sites with any name including fake name. No background information check is performed by the social networking sites, which leads to creation of fake account by miscreants for committing crimes. Most of the networking sites and their servers are located abroad. In most of the cases, such fake accounts were successfully disabled in association with social networking sites, having offices in India. However, success rate is low in disabling accounts and getting information from social networking sites having offices abroad.

Also, as per National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a total of 4,192 cases were reported under section 66A of the IT Act 2000 (under the offences of sending offensive messages through communication services etc.) during 2014. State/UT wise cases registered, cases charge-sheeted, cases convicted, persons arrested, persons charge-sheeted and persons convicted under section 66A of the IT Act (under the offences of sending offensive messages through communication services etc.) during 2014 is enclosed at Annexure. The latest data pertains to the year 2014 only, as section 66A is no longer valid since Hon'ble Supreme Court of India order in Shreya Singhal Vs Union of India on 24th March 2015.
In all the above cases, data with regard to requests on the ground being "Anti-Religion" is not maintained separately.
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Annexure
State/UT wise cases registered (CR), cases charge sheeted (CS), cases convicted (CV), persons arrested (PAR), persons charge sheeted (PCS) and persons convicted (PCV) under section 66A of the Information Technology Act (Punishment for sending offensive messages through communication services, etc.) during 2014

Code	State/UT	2014					
		CR	CS	CV	PAR	PCS	PCV
1	Andhra Pradesh	89	30	0	63	31	0
2	Arunachal Pradesh	5	0	0	1	0	0
3	Assam	377	22	1	349	22	1
4	Bihar	111	13	1	105	14	1
5	Chhattisgarh	66	35	0	58	52	0
6	Goa	29	1	0	1	2	0
7	Gujarat	43	17	0	48	29	0
8	Haryana	76	20	3	40	30	4
9	Himachal Pradesh	16	7	0	6	14	0
10	Jammu & Kashmir	6	1	0	1	1	0

11 Jharkhand 21 7 0 15 8 0
12 Karnataka 603 47 0 175 64 0
13 Kerala 229 105 6 160 128 6
14 Madhya Pradesh 49 62 1 76 71 2
15 Maharashtra 375 99 1 182 130 1
16 Manipur 0 0 0 0 0 0
17 Meghalaya 5 3 0 4 4 0
18 Mizoram 15 4 0 4 4 0
19 Nagaland 0 1 0 0 1 0
20 Odisha 30 4 0 4 4 0
21 Punjab 123 35 6 85 39 6
22 Rajasthan 291 75 3 107 107 3
23 Sikkim 4 0 0 2 0 0
24 Tamil Nadu 55 11 2 51 12 4
25 Telangana 352 33 0 132 37 0
26 Tripura 2 0 0 0 0 0
27 Uttar Pradesh 898 137 6 592 210 6
28 Uttarakhand 23 13 0 26 26 0
29 West Bengal 144 32 1 98 34 1

TOTAL STATE(S) 4037 814 31 2385 1074 35

Code State/UT 2014
CR CS CV PAR PCS PCV
30 A & N Islands 1 0 0 0 0 0
31 Chandigarh 12 7 2 10 7 2
32 D&N Haveli 3 0 0 1 0 0
33 Daman & Diu 0 0 0 0 0 0
34 Delhi UT 137 39 5 27 44 5
35 Lakshadweep 1 0 0 0 0 0
36 Puducherry 1 0 0 0 0 0

TOTAL UT(S) 155 46 7 38 51 7

TOTAL (ALL INDIA) 4192 860 38 2423 1125 42

Source: Crime in India
Disposal of cases/persons by police/courts may include cases/persons of previous years also.